A LETTER
VVRITTEN BY THOSE of the Assembly in ROCHELL:

To Monsieur *le Duc de* *LES DIGVIERES.*

Containing an admonition vnto him, to leaue the Enemie, and to ayde them.

As also an exhortation and a warning vnto those that forsake the trueth, and cleaue vnto the Enemies thereof, to shun that vengeance which God will send *downe vpon them for the same.*

Printed in Rochell the 12. of Iuly.
1621.

BRITISH MUSEUM

A LETTER VVRITTEN BY THOSE OF *the Assemblie in Rochell:*

To Monsieur le Duc de LES DIGVIERES.

MONSIEVR.

IN the pittifull estate whereinto our Enemies haue reduced the Churches of this Realme, it would be a great comfort and consolation vnto vs, if wee were but to fight and contend against false accusations, and to defend our selues against the violent Counsels and courses of those, who openly adhearing vnto Antichristian Tirannie, esteeming it a title of Honour to be call'd our Enemies, for hauing sufficiently satisfied the first by our most humble Supplications and attestations to his Maiestie, and by our declaration newly published, wee hope that God will blesse and prosper our iust defence, and preserue his Churches from the vtter ruine, wherewith they are threatned. But wee cannot sufficiently

expreſſe, with what griefe of heart wee feele and perceiue our ſelues bound to maintaine our Innocencie againſt thoſe, who as well as wee, haue part in the publick intereſts of our Churches: ſpecially vnto your ſelfe my Lord, whoſe age, experience, and offices, make your proceedings more dangerous and hurtfull vnto thoſe againſt whom you employ them. We haue heretofore laboured therein, by the Letters that haue beene deliuered vnto you, from vs, and perceiuing the ſmall benefit that wee haue thereby receiued, wee had reſolued with our ſelues to reſt ſilent, if our conſciences did not binde and pricke forward vs, to ſtirre vp and quicken yours, by ſetting before your eyes the great hurt and detriment that you bring to the Church of God, at ſuch a time, wherein it hath moſt neede of your ayde and aſſiſtance. It was not without good reaſon, and experience it ſelfe ſheweth vs, that the laſt aſſembly at Loudun, doubted of the accompliſhment of the promiſes that were made vnto vs, at the Court: But your word interpoſing it ſelfe, with that of *Monſieur de Chaſtillon*, together with the conſideration of the ſtate wherein you were, made vs reſolue vpon a new proofe, aſſuring our ſelues, that the effect of the words giuen vnto vs, failing, you would make yours effectuall, for the ſubſiſting of the aſſebly, which in that caſe was to re-aſſemble, and cauſe them to obtaine that iuſt proceeding that had beene promiſed vnto them. With what diſpleaſure our Churches that ſent vs hether, haue beene tormented, when they perceiue that you diſapproue it, that you blame it, and that by your Letters, you preferre the colours and pretences of the perſecution, at this day raiſed againſt faithfull Innocents, before the preiudice of our

cauſe,

cauſe? The ſtate wherein you were in, the precedent voyage that you made to the Court, made honeſt men apprehend, that if after you withdrew your ſelfe from the Court, you returned thether againe, you ſhould be bound to effect ſome preiudiciall action, againſt the Church of God, and therefore they deſired you, to ſtand ſtill in your gouernment during the ſubſiſtance of this aſſembly. But without any reſpect or regard to the requeſts and intreaties of ſo many Churches, you left your Prouince, made another voyage to the Court, and for the contentment of our Enemies, and the diſpleaſure of thoſe of our profeſſion, by your preſence you authoriſe thoſe that inceſſantly labour to worke our ruine and deſtruction. Your proteſtation to continue in the ſame profeſſion, the refuſall of the dignity, that was offered vnto you, vpon condition to change your Religion, and your reconciliation not long ſince made vnto the Church at Charenton, put vs in good comfort, and made vs hope of ſome good effect for the good and benefit of our affaires, and ſome happy ſucceſſe of the paines that you ſhould take therein. But our Enemies haue gotten this aduantage, that your example hauing been made more conſiderable, the blame which you impoſe vpon this aſſembly, is more notorious, and your diſunion with our aſſembly, which repreſenteth all the Churches of this Realme, is more domageable, ſeruing for a pretence vnto thoſe, (who vnder hope by that meanes to keepe themſelues cloſe during the time of this publike calamity,) to ſeperate themſelues from our Vnion, from the which thoſe that haue deſigned our deſtruction, ſeeke to diſunite the Prouinces, Churches, and perſons of greateſt quality,

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therein vſing your name and authority, for the execution of ſo pernicious a deſigne; pernicious certainely we may well ſay: for to what end thinke you, my Lord, ſuch proceedings may tend but onely to weaken vs, and make our deſtruction more eaſie, and leſſe hazard vnto thoſe that vndertake it? *Monſieur de Pleſſis*, who without any reſpect of that, that had happened to *Nauarreux*, and after throughout all the Country of Bearn, being carried away by your Counſell, and abuſed by the particular promiſes that were made vnto him, at this day feeleth the effects of this proceeding: In your preſence beholding the Towne of Saumur taken from him, and put into anothers mans hands. The Inhabitants thereof making profeſſion of the ſame Religion, ſubiected to a Papiſticall Garriſon: The Vniuerſitie which he with ſo much paines and great care had there erected, deſtroyed. The Church in the ſame place made deſtitute of her firſt liberty, and all thoſe of this Realme depriued of the ſafety and ſecurity that they had in that place. Hath not the like dealing beene vſed vnto the reſt of the Gouernours of the places that wee had for ſecurity in Poictow, ſeeing that in ſtead of commaund in them, as they did for the ſecurity of our Churches, they are now commaunded by Garriſons of a contrary Religion, to the ruine and ſubuerſion of the Flockes of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt? Doe theſe proceedings that followed the ſedition in Towers, and were accompanied with the taking of Iargeau, and the violent diſarmings of thoſe of the Religion in diuers places, and ſeconded with the beſieging of Saint Iohn Angely, at this time furiouſly battered, beare any ſhew of any good intent that is meant towards vs to doe vs iuſtice? But are they not rather

ther directly contrary to the declarations not long since published; and to the particular promises made in fauour of those that would addict themselues vnto that which the Court desireth of them? and doe they not make euery man manifestly and plainely see, that the obedience whereof they so highly cry out, and which is required of vs, by demaunding pardon and absolution, and that wee should seperate our assemblie, before wee haue iustice done vnto vs, or any security for our Churches, tendeth onely, to bind vs to lay our throats open vnto those, that haue an intent and desire to cut them? What faults are we culpable of, being assembled vpon the permission that had beene graunted and giuen vnto vs, by those words that to vs should be as good an assurance as Letters Patents, yea and vpon yours also? What fault haue we committed, that being assembled, haue sought by all submissiue meanes possible vnto his Maiestie, to obtaine that iustice that had beene promised vnto vs, when wee remitted the pursuite thereof to our generall Deputies, and desired those that are of the greatest quality and degrees, and make profession of the Religion in this Realme, to ioyne their intercessions with them? And seeing that in stead of finding the effect of the performance of the promises made vnto vs, vpon your iust and most humble supplications presented vnto his Maiestie: we haue beene proclaimed Rebels, and declared to be criminals; and that as such, our processe hath beene made, some of vs haue beene executed by pictures, seeing in Viuards they haue risen vp in Armes, besieged, battered, and taken those places that we held, and in them, contrary to the agreements made, murthered some, and vsed great violences vnto vs, that at this

preſent they beſiege, and furiouſly batter the Towne of S. Iohn D'angely, can men iuſtly blame vs, if againſt ſuch violences wee oppoſe our defence, which nature teacheth euery man, and the law of God neuer reprooueth?

In the meane time, God forbid, that this extremitie whereinto we are reduced by conſtraint, ſhould in our hearts deface that moſt humble obedience, and moſt faithfull ſeruice that wee owe vnto our King, wherein wee proteſt inuiolably to continue, deſiring nothing more, nor ſo much then, that in the iuſtice and ſecuritie required by vs for our Churches, wee may attaine the meanes of a good and an aſſured peace in this ſtate, which as much as in vs lyeth we haue, & to our powers doe ſeek for: beſeeching God with all our hearts, to defend and preſerue the King, from thoſe dangers which the Enemies of his ſtate, expoſe his perſon vnto, in the perils of warre. In the meane time, my Lord, the iuſtneſſe of our cauſe, which ſo manifeſtly appeareth, and which God will alwayes make to ſhine, as bright as the Sunne at noone time, doth not hinder you, by your preſence, from approuing the proceedings, that are taken againſt vs; and which is more, blotting out the remembrance of the griefes that our Churches receiue, you promiſe and procure fauour vnto thoſe, who leauing vs, will ioyne themſelues vnto our Enemies, as you ſolicite them, by that meanes putting into the mouth of the Church at this day, the cõplaint that the Prophet *Ieremie* made, ſaying, That his neereſt friends, behaued themſelues diſloyally towards him, & were become his Enemies. The Sauiour of the world teacheth vs, that a houſe deuided in it ſelfe cannot ſtand. Iudge then my

Lord,

Lord, if it pleaſe you, what puniſhment they incurre that ſhall haue beene a meanes to ſtirre vp deuiſion in the houſe of God, and whether God will not reuenge the deſtruction thereof, not only vpon thoſe that openly procure it, but alſo on thoſe that in any manner or by any meanes ſhall haue contributed vnto the ſame. But after we had ſeene what hath beene done in Bearn, Viuarez, and againſt the aſſembly, after that by your preſence you haue fauoured a puiſſant Armie againſt the Churches of this Realme, and the loſſe of many places, that had beene giuen vs to hold for our ſecurities; In a time, wherein the violence of our Enemies could not be reſtrained by any authority, after you had conducted, or accompanied the Armie that is incamped againſt our brethren before the Towne of S. Iohn D'angely: if (as wee haue beene aſſured) you your ſelfe in perſon went to view the place, and vſed all the experience & dexterity that God hath giuen you in Armes, to make the ſiege, and the meanes to take it more eaſie; what ſubiect haue not wee to complaine againſt you, who in ſtead of being ſicke for *Ioſephes* affliction, feare not to be the greateſt inſtrument of his murthering: Is it poſſible, that you cannot apprehend the ruine of ſo flouriſhing a Church, that God hath here gathered together, and that you are not moued at the deſtruction that men ſeeke to bring vpon Monſieur *De Sobize*, and vpon ſo many braue Gentlemen, that haue beene the firſt that preſented themſelues in the mouth of the breach, that is made in the Citie of *Dauid*? that courageouſly labour to repaire the ſame, at this day in a manner wholly hindering that courſe of the deſtruction already begun in our Churches, and proiected againſt all

of them. The knowledge that God hath giuen you of his holy name, bindeth you to employ that authority, whereunto hee hath aduanced you, and all the graces that hee hath imparted vnto you, and bestowed vpon you, to the maintainance of his Church; and will you imploy them in the destruction thereof? Piety requireth that you should procure all good, and liberty vnto those that make profession of Religion, and will you approue and allow of their desolation? Christian charity can hardly endure without watry eyes, that wee should see one man onely put to death: and can you with a smooth and smiling countenance, behold and see the butcherie and cruell slaughter of so many of our brethren? What reputation can they get or procure vnto themselues that fight against that Gospell, whereof they make profession? What fidelity may our Prince expect from them, that being not faithfull vnto God, abandon the maintainance of his cause? And from whence proceedes this great distaste of vs at this day, but only from this, that there are some men, (and those of greatest qualities) that giue themselues to affect the Religion, as long, and no longer, then that it serueth their turnes to aduance them vnto dignities, and to encrease their riches? Is it not easie to be iudged, that if couetousnesse and ambition, be a meanes to make them disloyall vnto God, and to dispise and neglect their owne saluation, that the same vices will easily draw them on to infidelity towards their Prince, and to the dispising of their owne honours? Was it a small matter in your sight, to see diuers Ministers driuen away from their dwelling places, the exercise of Religion banished out of those places, where it was established, and the inhumanities,

manities, which haue bin impiouſly vſed, within theſe few yeares vpon the dead bodies of the faithfull, almoſt in all places of this Realme, The burnings and deſtroying of diuers of our Churches, the many ſeditions, and ſpecially that laſt made in the Citie of Touers, beſides the entier deſolation of thoſe of Bearn, haue they not touched nor mooued your ſoule with a Chriſtian compaſſion, and a iuſt apprehenſion, in ſhort time to behold and ſee thoſe horrible cruelties executed vpon vs and our children, that after the like proceedings were at other times executed vpon our fathers, and that after (as at this day) they had bin deceiued, by words of peace and quietneſſe? Certainely, my Lord, if you acknowledge that you hold that honor which you at this preſent enioy, from the bleſſings that God hath giuen vnto your armes, then when you employed them for the defence of his Church, you ought alſo to beliene, that if now, when you draw neere vnto the end of your dayes, it is time to crowne your workes, with moſt iuſt and Chriſtian actions, you become an enemie vnto, and procure the ruine of thoſe that with you make profeſſion of the truth of the Goſpell, he will be angry againſt you, and will couer your face with ſhame and ignomie, you ſhall expoſe your ſelfe to be diſpiſed of all men, and made a laughter vnto thoſe namely that haue made vſe of you, to execute their wicked intents, and bring that curſe vpon your head, which he pronounceth againſt thoſe that curſe his people, and thoſe moſt fearefull iudgements, which in his wrath, he ſheweth vpon thoſe, that riſe vp againſt, and withſtand the Kingdome of his Sonne Ieſus Chriſt: all maner of the deaths of thoſe whom God loueth, are precious in his

ſight; but he will require their blood at the hands of thoſe, that ſhall vniuſtly ſhed the ſame, he that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye, and you are not ignorant thereof: With what conſcience then can you continue and remaine among our enemies, that abuſe the affections and conſcience of the King, for ours and the ſtates vtter ruine, giue counſell for the deſtruction of Townes, wherein the holy name of God is purely inuoaked, and participate in the forcible action that are done againſt them? would you thruſt your ſword into the breſts of your owne brethren, and bath your hands in the blood of thoſe whom God hath redeemed by the blood of his deare Sonne Ieſus Chriſt? No my Lord, rather in the name of God, if there be any care of his Church, yet reſting in you, if there be any charity in your heart towards thoſe that are his members, and which is more, if you deſire not to bring vpon you and yours, the wrath and vengance of God (for we are bound by the duty of our Offices and the diſcharge of our conſciences to ſpeake in this maner vnto you) be mooued to compaſſion vpon the pittifull dealing which at this day is vſed againſt the faithfull, acknowledge the deceits and impoſtures of our enemies, note the violent courſes they vſe againſt your brethren, and with a prudent foreſight apprehending future miſchiefes, come out from the middle of them, leaſt you be enueloped among the plagues, that God will powre downe vpon the veſſels of his wrath, when he ſhall haue ceaſed the vſing of them, for the puniſhment of his children. Aide not them, that haue no other intent then to deſtroy vs, by making a deuiſion among vs: forſake not the members of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, but rather

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ioyning with vs, bring the reſt of our brethren with you, who by your example, you haue withdrawne from vs; and vſe the meanes, to cauſe them alſo to come with you, who as yet are aſleepe, and reſt vnder the deceitfull aſſurances that are giuen them of ſome quietneſſe: to the end that being all, (according to our duties) moſt ſtrickly vnited together by the ſacred bands of pietie, peace, and charitie; we may effectually labour together for the publique Tranquility and quietneſſe of Gods houſe: And ſeeing that there is no other meanes left vnto vs, we employ a iuſt and couragious defence, which being bleſſed by God, ſtayeth the violent courſes of thoſe that perſecute vs, deliuereth the Towne of S. *Iohn D'Angely* from their hands, and preſerueth all the reſt: ſhall not ſo many perſons of good quality who acknowledging the vnfaithfulneſſe and the intents of our enemies, conſecrate their blood, to empeach the deſtruction of the faithfull, prouoake you, to a holy iealouſie, by their example? You haue heretofore bin a puiſſant inſtrument in the hand of God, to defend his Church from oppreſſion: be the ſame againe, my Lord, at this day, and that the rather and ſtronglie, becauſe God hath giuen you many bleſſings in aboundance. And if you diſpiſing theſe exhortations, that we giue you, by the compaſſion of Chriſt, be ſtill in this time, and faile in the ſuccours which you owe vnto all good men, God will not ceaſe to raiſe vp, peace and deliuerance by other meanes, vnto his children. But it is to be feared, that he will reuenge, the diſſipation that you ſhall make of your brethren, vpon you and yours. We beſeech Almighty God, with all our hearts, to touch your heart by his holy Spirit, to inſpire you with God

and

and godly counsell, to doe that which we require of you according to his will, and that receiuing you into his protection, he will take pitty vpon his Church, send peace vnto this State, and tranquility and security to those troupes that he hath assembled therein. We rest, my Lord, Your most humble and most affectioned seruants, the Deputies of the reformed Churches of France, and the Soueraignety of Bearn assembled in Rochell:

Bessay.	President.
Rossell.	Lieutenant.
Guerin.	Secretaries.
de la Porte.	Secretaries.

In Rochell the 12. of Iune. 1621.

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